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## SERMON VII.

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### THE CRUCIFIXION AND ITS WITNESSES.

"AND sitting down they watched him there."—MATT. 27: 36.\*

WE behold the Gospel in a single, comprehensive view when we stand before the cross of our dying Savior. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners by his atoning death—this is the good news of salvation. It is true the Gospel was announced in few and mysterious words in the garden, it was amplified in successive promises, it was typified in the economy of symbols and sacrifices, it was preached by the prophets, it was heralded by John, it was taught by Jesus. All this was indeed good news about salvation, but on Calvary is salvation itself. All that was revealed before was the Gospel in words, but there is the Gospel in substance—Christ dying for sinners. There, at Golgotha, the place of a skull, the eternal purpose is fulfilled, the everlasting plan accomplished. The Father's love is manifested, the grace of the Son is revealed, the power of the Spirit is applied. In one final, comprehensive manifestation, all that Jesus had said, and

\* Sermon for Sacramental services.

felt, and wrought, was brought to view. His deep words were not comprehended until that final explanation; his loving heart was not understood until it broke; his ministry was not apprehended until he bled a sacrifice of reconciliation; his kingdom was not conceived until he wore a crown of thorns. If you would understand salvation, come up to the hill of crucifixion; if you will know Jesus, stand beside the cross. They who were inspired to proclaim the first messages of redemption ever led the way to the death-scene, and turned the longing eye to Jesus there. They, indeed, spake of the manger, of the Jordan, of the wilderness, of Bethany and Olivet and Jerusalem, of the temple and the garden; but these they passed swiftly by—lingering only at the last—that they might hasten on to Calvary. They preached Christ, but Christ crucified; they preached salvation through him, but by the Cross. The sight of the dying Savior is the regeneration of the sinner. He may see him speaking as never man spake, walking in holy example as never man walked; but all this does not reach his heart and meet his case. But when he sees the bleeding heart, his heart is melted. When he beholds the dying sacrifice, he dies to the world and sin. At the cross he lives the life which is by the faith of the Son of God. The Christian life is quickened by looking unto Jesus. But the scene in which the believing eye beholds him is always laid somewhere near the cross. The eye looks for the Master all along his weary, sorrowing way, from Jordan to Pilate's Hall, for instruction and for guidance, but it is ever a way that leads up to the mountain of the cross. In duty and in suffering the look for the Master is always directed toward Gethsemane and the road that leads from Gabbatha, the place of the pavement to that sacred spot which was "nigh unto Jerusalem." And when, in that strange throng that presses along the way of grief, the eye rests on one who bears a cross, faith tearfully exclaims, "Rabboni." But when, at last, the up-lifted form of the dying one is brought to view, and the wounded hands and side are seen all stained with atoning blood, and Pilate's words come ringing on the heavy air, "Behold the man," then, then the Christian's love, and faith, and zeal, and hope reanimated and fired anew, find full expression in words of holy fervor, "My Lord and my God;" my life and my salvation! The life of faith and love, the life immortal begins at the cross; it goes to its fountain day by day by seeking anew the dying Master's presence. Faith comes away from its toils and its sorrows, its work and its burden, and sitting down before the cross, meekly folds its hands in meditation, prayer, and praise, and lingers long and loves to linger, where sat the Gentile soldiers, of whom it is remembered that, "Sitting down they watched him there." To-day the Church invites the followers of the Savior to come together to this solemn place. She repeats the Master's

words: "Remember me." Let us gather around our dying Lord.

To help our minds and hearts in this service of remembrance, let us gather up the sketches of the Evangelists, and bring to view the scene at Golgotha. Let us look upon the Crucified and upon the watchers at his cross.

I. The Crucifixion and its witnesses. The place is not far from the Holy City. Yonder is the Temple, with its altar and its sanctuary. The typical sacrifice is yet offered there. God is yet within the veil. What histories are enshrined within that monument! The Tabernacle and the Temple have held the moveable and the fixed center of God's revealed presence for many a generation. All the world has known or felt of God has been learned and experienced around the sanctuary and the altar. From Zion has gone forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. There, too, has the promise been recorded and the covenant has been perpetuated. If the sacred courts have been full of memorials, they have been full of foreshadowings, too, of things to come. The altar, the sacrifice, the robed priest, the sprinkled blood, have long betokened Isaiah's Emmanuel—God with us—the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. There Israel has longed and prayed for Messiah—"the Coming One." But, mystery of mysteries, he has been there. The Lord has suddenly appeared in his temple. In the temple of his body the promised Son of the Highest has long ago appeared. The veil of unbelief has been upon their hearts so dense and heavy that Jews and Jewish priests have failed to see their cherished prophecies fulfilled, their promised deliverer at hand. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. Under the shadow of the Temple they have seized the Lord of the Temple; the hands that offered the sacrifice have been lifted against the antitype of the sacrifice; the voices that prayed for Messiah have cried, "Crucify him! crucify him!" They have dragged him from his followers to Pilate's hall, and from the judgment-seat to this place of a skull. Unwittingly, here have they erected another altar, and prepared the eternal sacrifice. Now the glory is wavering about the shekinah, the veil of the sanctuary is trembling. There stands the pride of the nation, significant and glorious as of old; but wait, the glory is departing; the empty, bereaved walls may stand, but the God of the Covenant will be far from its hallowed precincts; the mercy-seat will pass into the heavens. His cross is reared, but not within the city. Blood must not pollute its sacred dust. Ah! did they but know whose blood it was that bathed the cross and followed the cruel spear, not the dust of Jerusalem, but their dark souls who dragged him thence, might have lain beneath the crimson streams and gathered every precious drop. "His blood

be on us and our children." What agony of prayer, what earnestness of faith, would have transformed that fearful imprecation, had they known that this was indeed the Christ, the Son of God—Messiah of the promise! "The place is nigh unto Jerusalem." What wonderful words he had spoken there! what blessed miracles of mercy he had wrought in its ungrateful homes! how he had wept over its blindness and infatuation! Nigh unto Jerusalem—it is not far from Olivet, and Kedron, and Gethsemane. What memories must the dying sufferer recall as his languid eye sweeps slowly around this consecrated ground! But these histories are past. The closing scene is now before us. The story is simple. The description, true to nature and divinely appropriate to the solemn dignity of the great event, bears no coloring of human art. A few grand strokes of simple truthfulness and that is all.

It is the third hour of the day. The sun has made half his way to the meridian. The Savior is nailed to the rude cross. It is not so high and lofty a thing as the painters make it. It was only such a load as could be laid upon the shoulders of a single person, for it was borne hither by one Simon, a Cyrenian. A post, a little higher than a human form, with a transverse piece, and not that elevated timber which gives comparative dignity to the scene in paintings. Nailed to this, as it lay upon the ground, the Savior was prostrate at the feet of men. Then with a careless lift and a cruel jolt, it was sent home to the rest made for it in the earth. On either hand two malefactors are crucified with him. A companion of sinners, and a sharer of their doom, is the innocent and guiltless Son of Man. "He was numbered with the transgressors." And now the deed is done. The slow approach of death is to be awaited by the unrelenting executioners, and oh! with what anguish by the suspended sufferer. What saith he to the bloody murderers, as they retire from their work of assassination. Not one complaining, recriminating word. He might have cursed them with a withering, blighting, scathing, everlasting curse. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." But pleadingly he lifts his eyes to heaven, and prays: "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." But look! what is it we see? A cross? But the malefactors are crucified as well as Jesus. Pierced hands and feet and flowing blood? The thieves are nailed and bleeding, too. What constitutes the mystery of this death? Is it only the strangely truthful inscription above that central cross, "Jesus, the Nazarene, King of the Jews!" Ah! no. It is in the glorious person, and sacrificial character of the Nazarene. He is Son of God and Son of Man. He dies not his own death, but the death of others, that they may live forever. But when we see the distorted, writhing frame, and

the blood, the thorn-pierced brow, do we see all? Are these the price of man's redemption? Oh! no. The sacrifice of atonement is offered within the veil. We stand only in the outer court; we see the victim slain and the flowing gore, but within, in the secret sanctuary of the heart, behind the veil of his flesh the offering is made.

It is the suffering spirit of Jesus that bears the penalty of sin. The burden of guilt had forced the strange wild plaint of the garden from his lips: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death." And now again it presses sore, and as the full penalty of sin, the hiding far away of God, comes like an iron into his soul he cries: "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" There is a mystery in that secret heart that only Jesus and the damned can know.

Such is the scene of death. But it is the sixth hour. What means this coming of midnight at the time of noon? Gloom settles on the hills around and on Jerusalem, and on the pallid faces of the dying, and on the grim-visaged sentinels that guard the place.

II. But while it is gathering deeper and deeper against the ninth sad hour, let us cast around us and see who are the witnesses of this scene. Did we not hear him say: "Father, forgive them." Is the husband of Mary, is Joseph here? He never called him father in presence of an unfamiliar ear. For aught we know Joseph was sleeping sweetly in the city of David. He looked up and prayed to God—his everlasting, only father.

God the father was a witness of that scene of agony. What feelings thrilled through the heart of God, who, who can tell? This was his well-beloved, only-begotten Son, the sharer of his nature, the only object of his infinite paternal love. He loved the world and gave this Son to die for its perishing sons. Was it no sacrifice. Then was his love no love, then was redemption without cost. We know that God can not be unhappy, but God can feel. Had he no sympathy with the suffering Son? And is joy the counterpart of agony. I know not what to call it, or how to describe it, but there was something in the heart of God that is not joy. It is blessedness, the God-like bliss of sacrifice of self for others. It was God's price for the restoration to his arms of the guilty and lost. It was the deep disturbance in his holy nature out of which was born the everlasting calm of justice satisfied, the eternal harmony of righteousness and mercy reconciled.

Is the divine Father unattended? Were angels in the city of David, did they hover over Gethsemane until the conflict ended their ministrations might joyfully be proffered, and are they not here? The song of heaven is hushed, and every harp is cast aside. Who can imagine that gathered throng of celestial spectators?



The manger was a mystery; the temptation, the weary life of thirty years, the judgment-hall and the garden were impenetrable; but this, who of the angels that desire to look into these things can solve it? What thoughts, what feelings, are darkly settling and deeply moving on that celestial company? But as they gaze they see what mortal eyes can not behold. Black-winged spirits float in the lowering darkness. Satan and his fiends are here. He who assaulted Jesus in the wilderness of trial, who left him for a season to gather energy for the conflict in the garden, is here. Now is his hour and the powers of darkness. In that unseen struggle what skill of satanic ingenuity, what force of once angelic power, he plies, no human mind can estimate. It is his only hour, his last. Such are the witnesses from the spirit-world that gather round the cross. The hosts of heavenly friends, the battalions of infernal foes. Are demons the only enemies at hand? Look down from the air to the hill of Calvary. No! Here are enemies he came to bless, now imprecating upon themselves and on their children the fearful curse of the shedding of innocent blood. They stand quarreling with Pilate concerning the inscription above his head. "Write not, I am king of the Jews," but "He said, I am king of the Jews." Pilate, the weak and yielding Roman officer, who washed his hands in water, to dye them deep in the blood of the guiltless, is here to see the work his guilty subservience has wrought. But what passing throng is this? Here are robes of office, faces that speak authority and wisdom, forms of gravity and sanctity. These are the chief priests, with the scribes and elders. Israel officially represented in a mock procession, saying: "He saved others, himself he can not save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he will have him; for he said I am the Son of God." And as the reviling leaders pass, on come the blinded, maddened throng, railing on him and wagging their heads, and saying: "Ah! thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it again in three days, save thyself and come down from the cross."

But hark! the thieves also that are crucified with him cast the same in his teeth. They have leisure from their pains, excreting as they are, to rail at their suffering, dying companion. But the Holy Spirit too is there. One heart is touched, one enemy becomes a friend. One malefactor rebukes his reviling partner, and expostulates, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." And, looking unto Jesus, he says: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto you, to-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise?" And now his enemies have done all they can. The mercenary soldiers

have parted his garments and cast lots for his vesture ; and "sitting down they watch him there."

Are there no friends to witness this dying scene? Have all forsaken him and fled? Is he God-forsaken and man-forsaken too? Have friendship, love, and gratitude, all perished? Has courage yielded to selfish, shameful fear? Where then are the scores whose friends he raised from death, the hundreds that he healed, the thousands that he fed? Are all afar away in this hour of his extremity? Thank God, no, no! For poor humanity's sake, thank heaven, some faithful spirits true to the last are here. Who are they? Whom of all he knew, and loved, and blest; that knew, and loved and cherished him, would you expect to be here? Who would be first to seek him, who would stand nearest to him, who would be last to leave him? Is it Peter who affirmed with solemn oath he would die with him rather than deny him? Is it Lazarus over whose grave he had wept, whom he had called back to life from the dead? Who? What heart can not answer? Oh! how the heart thrills as we open John's sweet history and read: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother!—That simple story is enough, it asks no comment. She who remembered the stall at Bethlehem, could not be absent from Calvary. How this stroke of inspired pencil completes the view. If that dark-browed warrior, the centurion, could say, amid the darkness and the quakings of the earth, "Truly this was the Son of God," we who look upon Mary at the cross can say, truly this was the Son of Man. Now, perhaps, she dimly begins to see the meaning of long past prophecies of angels, of many a darkly mysterious word of that strange child. Certain it is though Peter said concerning his willingness to die, "that be far from the Lord," she did not, nor did she hear again the mild rebuke "Wist you not, that I must be about my Father's business."

But she is not alone. Sisterly love has furnished a companion; with her is Mary the wife of Cleopas. But there is still another. Much has she loved and much has been forgiven her, and there she stands weeping at the feet now bathed with flowing blood. It is Mary Magdalene. Oh! the courage of love. Self-confidence has failed, boasting rashness has fled away, manly fortitude and daring have faltered and succumbed. But love, unthinking, uncaring, fearless love, has pressed through the throng, and faced the danger, and pushed aside expostulation, crying: "Let us go that we may see him die," and if God wills die with him. Or do you think that woman dared to go where man could not, because she presumed upon a woman's liberty and man's chivalric forbearance and respect, and this accounts for love's presence at the cross? Ah! wait. Read John's history again. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, woman behold thy son. Then saith he to

the disciple, behold thy mother." Yes. John is here to see the heaving breast on which he had so often leaned. Love, manly love, is stronger too than death.

And now it is the ninth hour. Jesus, knowing that all things were accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, "I thirst." Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar; and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When therefore Jesus had received the vinegar, he said it is finished, and crying with a loud voice, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit," "and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost." Closed forever was the volume of his gospel, and he himself set fast the seal and wrote—this is the end. Complete was all his atoning, redeeming work, and his own voice proclaimed, "It is finished."

The darkness dissipates, nature resumes her wonted course until the day he comes again; the priests go back to the now-deserted temple with the vail of its sanctuary rent in twain; the people disperse, a people no more forever, to wander a reproach and a by-word in all the earth, until they look again on him they pierced and mourn; John seeks out the terrified disciples and gathers them for prayer; Mary goes home to weep and wait; and the other Marys go their ways until Joseph of Arimathea shall have laid him in his own new tomb, where sitting down over against the sepulchre, they will watch him there.

My hearers, had you been in Jerusalem, while these thrilling scenes were passing, where would you have been found? Start not at the question. It may not be answered so promptly as you think. There is ground for the question; where would you have been numbered in the hour of your Redeemer's agony and shame—you, that outwardly bear a Christian name by courtesy of Christendom, if not by profession of the name of Jesus; you, that despise and hate the very lineaments of a Jewish face because his fathers crucified the Lord, where would you have stood? Would you have joined the railing throng, or skulked with fear away, or, boldly with Peter denied your Savior? Ask your heart the solemn question.

If you do not hesitate to answer as Peter promptly answered, because you, like him, have not been put on trial of your faith and courage, answer a question akin to the one we have propounded to you, Where are you now? Are you among the followers of Jesus, or among his enemies? Do you openly confess his name, or do you, by every word and deed, by your compromise with the world and Satan, daily deny the Lord? Where are you now? There is a solemn sense in which you may crucify the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame.

If you can bitterly condemn the Roman governor, and execrate the Jewish throng, and reprobate the perfidy of Peter, the fear



and faithlessness of all who forsook the Master and fled, be careful that you seal not your own eternal condemnation. Remember, whoso is ashamed of Jesus now, of him will he be ashamed when he comes in his glory.

Come to his side with faith and love; endure the cross with him, despising the shame. He will ere long come in a glorious triumph, and if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.

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## SERMON VIII.

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### THE GOSPEL PRODUCING DISTURBANCE.

"THINK not that I am come to send peace upon the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."—MATT. 10: 34.

THIS announcement from the lips of one prophesied of as the Prince of Peace, and heralded by that song of the angels, "Glory to God in the Highest, peace on earth and good will to men," is sufficiently startling to arrest our wakefullest attention—especially so as Christ was not wont to deal in paradoxes or hyperboles, but to speak only words of soberness and truth.

"Think not"—as though he saw they were, or might easily be, mistaken on this point—"think not that I am come to send peace upon the earth: I am not come to send peace, but a sword." "Dream not that in becoming my disciples you have before you a life of ease—a pathway of flowers and fragrance alone. There will be thorns with the roses. 'In me ye shall have peace; but in the world ye shall have tribulation.' The practical results of my teachings will be commotion and strife, and whoever rides to victory with me, shall ride oftentimes in the whirlwind." Not that God loveth war for the sake of war; but that the preaching of the truths which men dislike will arouse their opposition and lead to battle.

The Gospel of Christ meant something; its teacher was in earnest; it had its mission to accomplish, and it was the purpose of Heaven that it should not be a failure. Had it come with honied words to please those who had denounced the government of God, then the conspirators who had engaged in an unholy rebellion

\* Delivered as a Baccalaureate, June 15th, 1862.

against the Divine authority, would have made no resistance, and of course, there would have been no disturbance. But it came to dislodge treason—and all sin is nothing else but treason against the government of God—to pronounce the sentence of condemnation against the wrong-doer, and it came with power. While it presented offers of mercy to those who were willing to return to their allegiance, it uttered more than the thunders of Sinai against those who persisted in their crimes, and refused to lay down their arms. While in the gentlest tones of compassion and pardon, it said to the penitent, "Go in peace, thy sins be forgiven thee," it came with the seven woes of the Apocalypse for all confirmed and graceless rebels, and poured them out upon their devoted heads in this wise:

"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

"Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law; judgment, mercy, and faith.

"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

"Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity!"

Such preaching produced disturbance. It had point to it, it had power in it, it was full of spears, sharper than any two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit; "it was quick"—that is, alive—the word of God always is—and men felt that it had awful meaning. There was war! If the Gospel had come as an opiate to soothe men's consciences and put them to rest—to throw the world into a deeper spiritual sleep than before, then there had been no commotion. But as it fired its guns over the heads of slumbering Jew and Gentile, it said in tones that they heard, "Awake thou that sleepest!" And they couldn't sleep! Whatever else they did, they could not sleep. They might curse, as many of them did, but as well sleep on a Fourth of July morning, with the cannon thundering on the village common, as sleep under such preaching. One must learn to sleep on a bed of nettles, before he could slumber under such pulpit denunciations. The Diet of Worms didn't sleep under Martin Luther, nor the Court of the Bloody Queen under the faithful and scathing de-

nunciations of the fearless Knox. The preaching of Christ produced disturbance. His path was the track of an earthquake, and hell quaked as well as earth. Men prayed him to depart out of their coasts, and the devils shrieked, "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" making the same mistake that demons incarnate and non-carnate have often made since, in supposing that they were at any time legally exempt from persecution and punishment. Notice has been served once for all upon every evil spirit, and sentence of death has been passed. Execution is postponed only at the discretion and mercy of the Court.

The Apostles, too, having caught the spirit of the great Agitator, went every where sowing dragon's teeth, that sprang up armed men. The record of them is unwittingly given by the Jews of Thessalonica: "These men that have turned the world upside down have come hither also; and they all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying there is another King—one Jesus." Thus they had been guilty of preaching that heresy of a higher law, and the world was disturbed—turned upside down—and, as I once heard the worthy Bishop McIlvaine say, "it ought to have been, for it had long enough been wrong side up."

The Gospel has for its errand the radical and thorough reformation of human life, human society, human government, and human institutions generally, until they shall conform perfectly to the Divine model. This you can not have without a melee. Those good-natured, easy, and ease-loving souls who can not endure hostility or encounter hardship, are ill adapted to the stern work of such a reformation. Pity for them that they could not have had their lot cast in millennial times, when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; and their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Beautiful picture! and painted by the hand of a Master! But its beauty is enhanced four-fold by the dark background of the pre-millennial ages through which we and our fathers have been compelled to pass. Pioneer life has its hardships—felling the forests, bridging the gulfs, building the highways; and its perils of wild beast, and deadly reptile, and deadlier miasma—hardships and perils encountered in transforming barbarism to civilization. So these are the pioneer ages of the Gospel. Demons are to be encountered in the body and out of the body, worse than the wolf and the malaria. Giant sins are to be attacked and felled, deep gulfs 'twixt earth and heaven are to be bridged, and a highway cast up for the redeemed of the Lord to pass over; "and

it shall be called the way of holiness. No lion shall be there; nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

But before this vision, there come many others of toil and trouble, drum and sword, "confused noise and garments rolled in blood, and battles with burning and fuel of fire." And these must come in order to the other. So Christ came to send a sword, and to bring division as the inevitable forerunner of the glorious time which is to come hereafter. Whoever determines upon any end, adopts by implied necessity the means for accomplishing it. It was in this sense that the Prince of Peace came to send a sword and to bring division. He seeks for peace—true peace, deep-rooted and long-abiding—but he knows that such peace comes only of right, and that in such a world as this right comes only after long and stern moral conflicts. "First pure, then peaceable." And purity oftentimes cometh only of burning out the alloy in the hottest fires. That we be at peace is not one of the absolute requirements—that we be right, is. "As much as lyeth in you live peaceably with all men"—evidently implying, "As much as it does not lie in you to live peaceably with them, fight them!" Purity first, peace afterward. Truth can make no truce with falsehood. Right can never lay down its arms at the bidding of wrong. Justice "never surrenders." How hot the battle shall be, and how long, must depend upon the obduracy of the enemy and the strength of his forces. For the duration and virulence of every contest between the right and the wrong, the wrong is solely responsible. The highwayman whose arrest and punishment cost the lives of twenty men, bears upon his soul the blood-guiltiness of the murder of every one of them. Christ was King of Salem—that is, Peace; but he was Melchisedek—that is, King of Righteousness, first; and he will never wear his crown as King of Salem, until he has come to sway his scepter of righteousness over all the earth. "Our God is a God of war," whereon, wherever, and as long so ever as there is sin to be warred upon. Every enthroned wrong is to be dethroned; and Satan's empire will not yield without a struggle. When Christ ordered the demon to leave the young man, in the Gospel, he left; but he left his victim to all appearance well-nigh dead. Yet he was not dead. On the contrary, he was now for the first time on the way to full recovery. The devils who were expelled from the raving Gadarene entered into the swine, and they ran violently down into the sea, and were choked. Quite a disturbance followed. The Gadarenes (through some Safety Committee, probably,) at once besought Christ to depart out of their land. That a human being

had been delivered from a long and raving madness was nothing to them, in comparison with a loss of their property! A man had been saved; but that was nothing—their swine were dead, and that was something. When Paul was at Philippi, a demon was expelled from a young woman, quite to the discomfort of her masters, who had speculated out of her sad affliction, and made large gains by the fortune-telling of the poor lunatic. Her redemption was a matter of no congratulation; and Paul and Silas—for the deed of mercy had the usual fee—were beaten with many stripes, cast into the inner prison, and their feet were made fast in the stocks. But with unfettered souls they prayed and sang praises to God; and the prisoners heard them, and Heaven heard them, and a great earthquake came, with a writ of *habeas corpus* for the prisoners, and of *quo warranto* for the jailer. There was a very great disturbance. And yet Paul—rash enthusiast that he was, and miserable fanatic, as some would pretend—knew no better than to plunge straightway into another melee of the same sort at Ephesus. The account of it is in the nineteenth chapter of Acts:

“And the same time there arose no small stir about that way: for a certain man, named Demetrius, a silver-smith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen, whom he called together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said: Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover, ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying, that they be no gods, which are made with hands: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshipeth.

“And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians! And the whole city was filled with confusion, and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul’s companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theater. And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theater. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another; for the assembly was confused, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with his hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians!”



Here was another disturbance! And Paul was all his life-long getting into just such difficulties. And the Gospel, when faithfully administered, has many a time, in the hands of other preachers of it, produced similar commotions in neighborhoods, communities, and nations. And it will continue to do so until all the devils, whose name is legion, are dislodged and driven into the Lake of Genesaret, or some other.

When the Duke of Albemarle was expostulated with on the danger to which he exposed himself at the battle of Chatham, and was entreated to retire, he replied, very coolly: "Sir, if I had been afraid of bullets, I should have quitted this trade of a soldier long ago." The Reformer who is frightened at the sound of battle, had better adopt some other profession. A physician who administers a cathartic or emetic must understand his therapeutics and pharmacy well enough not to expect the same sort of sedative influence as follows a potion of morphine. An artilleryman must know that when he touches off a 200-pounder, there will be a noise, and somebody may be hurt when the shell bursts. If he is not prepared for such unpleasant results, he had better not enlist; and especially if he be an officer of such a company and can not bear to fire a gun, lest he should irritate the enemy, he had better throw up his commission. The Church of Christ is such an artillery company—the Gospel is a brass piece of the largest caliber and longest range, and its locker is full of shot and shell for every wrong on earth; and every minister is an officer in such a company; and the soldier of Christ who does not understand what the church militant means, and who supposes that he is never to use any but "Quaker guns" in storming the forts of his Satanic Excellency (who is at the head of all the confederate forces engaged in this secession from God's government) ought to study better his tactics and his orders, and accustom himself to the smell of powder, the explosion of shells, and the stern realities of bloody fight. Ministers especially, whose business it is to administer the Gospel, must understand that there are tonics and purgatives and irritants in its *Materia Medica* as well as sedatives and anodynes.

Crabbe has left us this picture of the Vicar:

"To what famed College we our Vicar owe,  
To what fair country let historians show;  
Few now remember when the mild young man,  
Ruddy and fair, his Sunday task began;  
Few live to speak of that soft-soothing look  
He cast around as he prepared his book;  
It was a kind of supplicating smile,  
But nothing hopeless of applause the while;  
And when he finished, his corrected pride  
Felt the desert, and yet the praise denied.  
Thus he his race began, and to the end  
His constant care was, no man to offend;

No haughty virtues stirred his peaceful mind;  
Nor urged the priest to leave the flock behind;  
He was his Master's soldier, but not one  
To lead an army of his martyrs on:  
Fear was his ruling passion."

If this be praise, we covet blame. It was probably intended for irony; but if not, it is only the keener irony for not being intended.

The Gospel is in its nature aggressive—systematically and powerfully aggressive upon all evil. It is not to fall in with established opinions, and organized wrongs, but to assail and correct them. It is not to stand simply upon the defensive. It is positive in its character, and revolutionary in its aims. The world is wrong, and it is to be made right; and Christianity has undertaken the work. Sins, established or unestablished, organic or inorganic, individual or social, have no rights that anybody "is bound to respect." All evils are usurpers, holding only by a robber's right. It is the purpose of the Gospel to dislodge them, and to enthrone the lawful king, whose right only it is to reign.

The religion of Christ is to prevail over all false religions—all infidelity, all immorality, all impiety, and all inhumanity. And these will not yield without a desperate struggle. It is not therefore to stand with cowed aspect, as though it asked pardon of men for being in the world; but to assert its claims and assume its rightful authority. Dubius, in Cowper, is no ideal of ours; you may remember him:

"Dubius is such a scrupulous good man—  
Yes—you may catch him tripping if you can.  
He would not with a peremptory tone,  
Assert the nose upon his face his own;  
With hesitation admirably slow  
He humbly hopes—presumes—it may be so.  
His evidence, if he were called by law,  
To swear to some enormity he saw,  
For want of prominence and just relief,  
Would hang an honest man, and save a thief.  
Through constant dread of giving truth offence,  
He ties up all his hearers in suspense;  
Knows what he knows as if he knew it not;  
What he remembers seems to have forgot;  
His sole opinion, whatsoe'r befall,  
Centering at last in having none at all."

Our Gospel is no Dubius! It is, on the contrary, most decidedly positive in its principles and peremptory in its teachings. Its unequivocal injunction is: "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil!" Those who stand as its advocates and representatives must be expected, therefore, to have a force of character that shall awaken, sometimes, stern opposition. "Wo unto you when all men shall speak well of you!" You have read, perhaps, of one, who, when

praised by some unscrupulous knave, started up, exclaiming: "What wickedness have I done, that this fellow praises me?" The encomiums of some men are very equivocal compliments. Their maledictions are to be chosen rather than their benedictions. A quaint old minister said, some years ago in my hearing, that he always expected to find the noblest men and the most earnest workers maligned and belied; just as he had always noticed that the fruit trees that were the fullest of clubs, were those that bore the best fruit. Good comfort to the persecuted for righteousness sake. Men may be persecuted for other sake than that. Marauders and pirates are sometimes hunted as well as prophets and martyrs. A man is not to take it for granted that the persecution which he suffers is conclusive evidence of his heroic virtue and his self-sacrificing devotion. But, on the other hand, it is certainly not to be assumed that a martyr is simply the victim of his own fanaticism, or folly, or head-strong rashness, or self-willed obstinacy. It may be the result of his incorruptible integrity, and his unswerving fidelity to the truth. "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution," is probably not yet an obsolete saying; it may continue in force until the millennium is fully come, which certainly is not yet.

All reformatory movements have been attended by agitation. They must be of course. They could not be reformatory without. And the greater the reformation, the greater the commotion. Revolutions can only come by war—in fact or in figure—and whoever has not the courage to meet the revolutionary war must abide a Tory. Before Luther, was Erasmus—learned and acute; but a coward. He didn't care to ride on the whirlwind. He knew the truth, but lacked the courage to avow it. He preferred to abide in peace. And so the reformation tarried until the storm-god—Martin of Erfurth—appeared. He was willing to ride with the Almighty, making the clouds his chariot, and the winds his messengers. "Were there as many devils at Worms as there are tiles on the roofs of their houses I'd go!" reveals the man, and shows us the hiding of his power. He dared and did. There were mighty thunderings and earthquakes in divers places. But he knew that when the earthquakes should cease, there would be a deeper and truer quiet—and more lasting.

Thunder-storms come often, and many there are that tremble as peal follows peal, and flash succeeds flash in the darkened skies; but we have learned that this is God's way of purifying the air, that man may breathe easier, and burning up the malaria that they may breathe larger. Storms at sea are sometimes unwelcome to the timid mariner; but without them the clear blue sea, exhaling its life-giving vapors to water and beautify the earth, would become a great mass of pestilence and death to every thing that hath breath by land and by sea. So God causeth the waves to

clap their hands in praise of him who sendeth the winds to stir them up.

Members of the Senior Class : In going forth to the more public and practical duties of life, we trust it is that you may make the world the better for your having lived in it. But, let me say to you, you will not find it stretching its hands imploringly and beseeching you to reform it. It is not anxiously waiting for you or anybody else to come around and heal it of its diseases, and receive its liberal and cheerfully-rendered fee for your medical advice and your proffered aid. Its devils will shriek when you attempt to cast them out; and your compensation for honest efforts to make the world better will often be no other than that of the Great reformer. Remember the words which he has said unto you : "The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me they will also persecute you." That is the fee for your best services.

He who goes forth into such a world as this, and moves among men without stirring up somebody, may write his life down a failure. His commander-in-chief has sent him into a rebellious province, and if he didn't at least now and then meet with some collision, as he encounters the enemies of his king, it is because he is chargeable with compounding of felony, or misprison of treason. It is war to which he is called—war upon wrong every where. His life is the life of a soldier intent upon quelling an insurrection and recovering the rebels to their allegiance. It will be no downy bed of ease on which such an one will be carried to the skies.

Moral courage is needed for moral conflicts. An American soldier at the siege of Quebec, being placed in a position of some danger, requested his officer to change his situation. Being asked his reason, he replied with felicitous serio-comic style, that he didn't know how it was, but somehow he didn't feel himself bold enough to stay there!" There are many such positions in the great campaign. The reformer who lacks courage for the hour of battle, has mistaken his calling.

And what is a man's life worth unless he is in the true sense a reformer, working to make man nobler, truer, diviner, by virtue of his worthy living? He who merely elbows his way along through the world with no other ambition than to get safely through it and out of it, has missed the road to true glory and honor and immortality. The warrior has always been the world's hero. He always will. It is not in human nature to withhold its homage from the truly brave. But as ideas advance, the courage that dares defend the right against all assailants will be crowned with honor above all other courage; and the Christian warrior will be the acknowledged hero of heroes.

With two words to each one of you, as you go forth into a wider life, I close this, our last sermon. Let the first be the counsel of

the great law-giver of Israel to his successor, Joshua, and they are the words of a hundred and twenty years of wisdom and experience: "Be strong, and of a good courage. Fear not; for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee. He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, therefore be not dismayed." The second shall be like unto it—the dying charge of the great king to Solomon: "Be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself."

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## SERMON IX.

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A SHORT DISCOURSE.

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### LIGHT A REPROVER OF EVIL DEEDS.

"For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."—JOHN 3 : 20.

THE more accurately we are able to judge of men's motives, the more fully do we see the correspondence which exists between human conduct and human character. A man's outward conduct develops his creed. "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God;" and the unbelieving mind finds daily opportunity to show forth its infidelity. Men whose hearts are alienated from God, have a natural aversion to his truth, as soon as the light of it penetrates the soul. As some wild beasts roam only in the hours of darkness, while by day they are hidden in their lair, so the carnal mind dreads the light, neither cometh to it, lest its deeds should be reproved.

Why does the evil doer thus hate the light?

1. I answer negatively that it is not because error is more intelligible than truth. The entrance of God's word giveth light. Truth seeks no concealment, admits of no obscurity; while falsehood lives and thrives only in darkness.
2. Nor is it because error is more easily defended than truth. An attorney once said that a man can be eloquent in defending the truth with half the powers which are requisite in order to be eloquent in defense of falsehood.
3. Nor is it because conscience is better pleased with error than



with truth. Falsehood is offensive to an honest conscience, nor can it cease to be so, except after protracted abuse.

4. Nor is it because error makes a better character than truth. The whole world are witnesses here, that the more conversant we are with truth, and the more cordially we embrace it, the more do our characters commend themselves to mankind.

5. Nor is it because error makes men happier. Falsehood must inevitably be detected. It is a precarious basis for happiness. Truth only proves an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast.

6. Nor does error suit the necessities of the ruined sinner better than truth. Once open the eyes of men to see themselves as they are, and they find nothing to meet their case but divine truth.

I answer positively—

1. Wicked men hate the light, because it exposes their vileness. When the cellar that has been shut up for years is first laid open, by the opening of windows and doors, it presents a disgusting sight. We wonder how so much filth could have accumulated there. So the dark and wicked heart of man seems unutterably vile and loathsome when God's word and Spirit enter and illuminate it.

2. Wicked men hate the light, because it exposes their danger. Sin and its consequences are palpably connected. It is a fever in the soul which of itself is painful. Its presence insures the certainty of misery. It is a leprosy which must eat up the soul and subject it to an eternal death.

3. Wicked men hate the light, because it shows the necessity of a better character. The soul in love with sin is agonized with an apprehension of the necessity of reformation. Sinful habits let go their hold with wonderful reluctance. They cry out, "Let us alone," and when they are expelled, they are like those howling demons, who were driven out by our Savior. The contrast which exists between good and bad men, is painful to the wicked just in proportion as it is perceived.

4. Wicked men hate the light, because it awakens the fear that they will be overcome. They are always found in an attitude of defiance. They cherish the most determined hostility to God, and treat him as a foe. The entrance of light shows God's superiority in goodness and power, while it exhibits the certainty of their ultimate defeat.

#### REMARKS.

1. God ranks all who hate and resist the light among evil doers. Multitudes pride themselves upon their rectitude of conduct, who yet are, in the sight of God, exceedingly wicked. We see men abusing the law of God which is holy, just, and good. We see them abusing the person of God by their neglect of his commands, and the disregard of all his wishes. We see them abusing their

own consciences; we see them abusing themselves and their fellow-men by a course of conduct which tends to produce misery here and hereafter. We see them cherishing a spirit which would mar the concord of heaven, and break up the heavenly choirs, and yet glorying in their native excellence, and rejoicing that they are not as other men. Yet so long as they resist the light, they must be regarded as evil doers, and be punished as such.

2. As men grow in wickedness, we may expect to see them growing in hatred of the truth. This may account for the fact that so many discontinue the use of the means of grace.

3. This subject explains the reason that faithful ministers must expect persecution. If they make men see their sins, they incur odium. The man who loves sin, and will not abandon it, will hate the occasion of its constant presentation.

4. We see the cause of the torments of the convicted sinner, and of the horrors of the dying bed; and also why there will be such amazing wrath at the opening of the latter day glory. The pouring of truth in all its pungency and power upon the long-abused conscience, is like the sunbeam admitted upon the animalculæ who writhe and twist and then expire.

5. We see one of the ingredients of eternal woe. Every lost sinner will spend his eternity in a blaze of light which will fully exhibit his enormity of guilt. There can be no escape from that light which was hated and shunned through a life time. Conviction will be thorough, and ever increasing in the bosom of the lost, and this will constitute the worm that never dies.

## THE PRAYER-MEETING.

### The Death of the Righteous.

Nor always are the dying scenes of God's children witnessed by earthly friends. But doubtless ministering angels wait around and form the convoy of the departing souls in their upward flight to heaven. Recently in the Fulton-street Prayer-meeting a gentleman arose who was evidently an officer in the army, and quoted from the words of

Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." He said that after a late skirmish, or battle, on coming out, the roll of his company was called, and he found that two men were missing to whom he was very much attached as Christians. They were pious, godly men. Their voices were always heard in their little company prayer-meetings. They

were always the right men in the right place.

He knew not what had become of them, whether wounded, taken prisoners, or killed. He was determined to know, and though the matter was full of danger he made up his mind he would look for these men in the face of the enemy and over ground which the enemy commanded. The enterprise was so hazardous that he would not ask any one to go for him or with him. So he ran over that ground alone, and turned up the faces of those who had fallen, and there he found all that remained, this side of heaven, of his two praying friends. They had been killed outright, and their faces looked beautifully calm and peaceful, as if their last thoughts had been of the blissful home to which they had been so suddenly summoned. I ran back, said the speaker, thinking all the way, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

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For the Prayer-Meeting.

#### The Soldier's Prayer.

It was the evening after a great battle. All day long the din of strife had echoed far, and thickly strewn lay the shattered forms of those so lately erect and exultant in the flush and strength of manhood. Among the many who bowed to the conqueror Death that night, was a youth in the first freshness of mature life. The strong limbs lay listless, and the dark hair was matted with gore on the pale, broad forehead. His eyes were closed. As one who ministered to the sufferer bent over him, he at first thought him dead; but the white lips moved, and slowly, in weak tones, he repeated,

"Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;  
If I should die before I wake,  
I pray the Lord my soul to take;  
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

As he finished he opened his eyes, and meeting the pitying gaze of a brother soldier, he exclaimed, "My mother taught me that when I was a little boy, and I have said it every night since I can remember. Before the morning dawns I believe God will take my soul for 'Jesus' sake,' but before I die I want to send a message to my mother."

He was carried to a temporary hospital, and a letter was written to his mother, which he dictated, full of Christian faith and filial love. He was calm and peaceful. Just as the sun arose his spirit went home, his last articulate words being,

"I pray the Lord my soul to take;  
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

So died William B——, of the Massachusetts volunteers. The prayer of childhood was the prayer of manhood.

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For the Prayer-Meeting.

#### The Effect of Prayer.

Most persons find no difficulty in believing that prayer exerts a happy and desirable influence on the worshiper himself; but even this can hardly be, if it is generally understood that this is *all*. Indeed, I can not help thinking that conscience itself would dissuade many from resorting to prayer, if brought to look on it as no better than a kind of well-meant cheat which we practice on ourselves for its moral uses. Prayer, to have much effect on ourselves, must be believed to have an effect on God. It is too solemn a transaction by far to be made use of as a kind of

spiritual strategy. No; make not our prayers to seem one thing and be another. Strike not our devotions dead by the skeptical sophism that they can only have an effect *on ourselves*. They will have an effect *on God*; for He has said that they will, and the promise has been ratified and confirmed in the experience of holy and devout men of all ages. They will have an effect on God, for He who is "in the bosom of the Father" has said that they will. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." Again it is said: "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." And more affecting still in the words of the text: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him." Wherefore, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ."

For The Prayer-Meeting.

**Questions to those who Neglect Prayer-Meetings.**

1. ARE you always better employed? If not, can it be right in you to absent yourself?
2. Do you get more good to your own soul, and do more good to others, by staying away? If not, can you be acting wisely?
3. Does your own conscience justify you, or have you not sometimes a difficulty in keeping it quiet on the subject?
4. Will a death-bed commend

your present course, or will you then look upon your neglect of prayer-meetings with pleasure, think you?

5. Does not your pastor suffer by your neglect? Does it not hurt his feelings, cool his zeal, and hinder his usefulness?

6. Are not your fellow-members in the church discouraged by you, and may you not thus offend Christ's little ones?

7. Is not your own family injured by your neglect? What will your children think of prayer-meetings, seeing you habitually neglect them? Is it surprising if they despise them?

8. Is there no reason to fear that unconverted sinners may be both hindered and led to think lightly of prayer by your conduct?

9. Can you have a proper concern for the prosperity of the Church, the spread of Christ's cause, and the conversion of sinners if you never meet to pray for them?

10. Are you sure that you fulfill your duty as a church-member while you neglect prayer-meetings? Is neglect of duty no sin, and is there no probability of you being called to account for it?

11. Did any one ever really gain anything, either in temporal or spiritual things, by neglecting prayer-meetings? If you think so, can you prove it?

12. Is there no selfishness, or pride, or worldly-mindedness at the root of your neglect? If so, ought such things to be encouraged?

13. Would it be right to give up the prayer-meetings? Do you think this would please God, or improve the cause? But if all the members did as you do, must they not be given up? Could not the rest find excuses for staying away,

think you, as well as you? Do you not think they would if their hearts were as worldly, or as cold, or as indifferent about the prosperity of the cause as you appear to be?

#### Life in Earnest.

It is the eternal lifetime that makes the lifetime of the earth such a solemn thing. Sever the living here from the living hereafter, and man's longest being on earth is little more in importance than the flutter of a leaf, his death but the falling of a blossom. But fasten on the infinite and the eternal to our present existence and every thing in life becomes mighty, momentous, solemn. The pang that shoots through our frame and makes each fiber quiver is such as even a weak woman might endure—were it but for a moment—were it to die with us and be buried in the same tomb—were there no capacity of eternal anguish in our nature, or no eternity in which that capacity might develop itself. The sting of a moment is a trifle, but the eternal stinging of the undying worm is terrific beyond all utterance. In like manner the thrill of fresh joy which makes the whole man throb with delight, would be scarce worth the having or the losing, were it only like the lightning, flashing intensely bright, and then quenched forever. But a nature gifted with faculties for infinite enjoyment, and with a whole eternity wherein these joyous buds shall expand themselves in undecaying beauty and fragrance, turns our whole life into a deep and awful reality. A flower that folds its leaves, and withers down at sunset may be carelessly trodden under foot; but a star that shall roll round forever

in its orbit—either effulgent in its brightness or dark in the gloom of its own choice is an object of wonder and awe.

Such is the life of man—not of one man, or of some men, but every man. By itself it may seem a plaything; in connection with the everlasting future it becomes awfully real and solemn in its aspect. We may be poor, unlettered, obscure, hard-toiling men, still our life is an infinite reality; no mere shadow or vision, but an inconceivable reality in all its parts, great or small.

•We must then live in earnest. No other kind of life deserves the name. Life is not life if it be not in earnest. Anything short of this is gross inconsistency—an utter mockery of life. In truth there can be no rational medium between flat infidelity and the most glowing fervor. If there be anything in real life, or anything real in eternity, we must be in earnest. If our souls have any value beyond the trees of the forest, we must be in earnest. If heaven be no fable and hell no dream, we must be in earnest. If God so loved the world as to give his Son for us, we must be in earnest. If Jesus died and rose again, and lives in heaven for us, we must be in earnest. “Whatever our hand findeth to do, let us do it with our might.”

*Gedenke zu leben*—think of living, is one of Goethe's thoughtful aphorisms. And Carlyle's commentary upon it is worthy of himself. “Thy life, wert thou the pitifulest of all the sons of earth, is no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is thy own. It is all thou hast to confront eternity with. Work, then, like a star, unobscured, yet unresisting.”



For the Prayer-Meeting.

### Activity in Heaven.

BECAUSE heaven is a place of rest it does not follow that it is a place of idle inactivity. Like the Sabbath, which is its type, it will be a state of such rest as is *consistent with active worship*. The activity of heaven will be tireless and untiring. The highest mental and spiritual exercises of those who are admitted there will not tire; there will be neither flesh nor blood for them to tire; and emancipated from these the soul in heaven, like the soul on earth, could it be thus set free, will exercise its highest powers, untiring and untired. Nor is this all. Heaven is a state of active beneficence. There all are employed in doing good. They who tasted beneficence as a luxury on earth shall banquet on it in heaven for ever. All shall do good; from the highest seraph that bends before the throne, to the last soul saved as by fire. No sooner do saved spirits breathe the atmosphere of heaven than they fly off on errands of love, "ministering angels" to all who need their ministering offices. How sublimely did Dr. Beecher discourse on this theme to his pupils. Hear him:

"Excepting freedom from sin, intense, vigorous, untiring action is the mind's highest pleasure. I would not wish to go to heaven did I believe that its inhabitants were to sit inactive by purling streams, to be fanned into indolent slumbers by balmy breezes! Heaven, to be a place of happiness, must be a place of activity. Has the far-reaching mind of Newton rested from his profound investigations? Have David and Isaiah hung up their harps, useless as the dusty arms in Westminster Abbey? Has Paul, glowing with godlike enthu-

siasm, ceased itinerating the universe of God? Are Peter, and Cyprian, and Luther, and Edwards idling away eternity in mere psalm singing? Heaven is a place of activity, of never-tiring thought. David and Isaiah will sweep noble and lofty strains in eternity, and the minds of saints, unclogged by cumbersome clay, forever feast on a banquet of thought—rich, glorious thought. Young gentlemen, press on—you will never get through. An eternity of untiring activity is before you, and the universe of thought your field."

### The Little Preacher.

THE following touching incident was related a few days since in the Fulton-street Prayer-meeting as one of the fruits of a revival in Fall River:

"A little boy was converted who was only ten years old. He was a bright, intelligent little boy. His father and mother were utterly regardless on the subject of religion. They had not attended any place of worship for years. Immediately after little Willie's conversion he became exceedingly anxious about the salvation of his father and mother. When his father came in he would run and spring into his lap, and putting his arms around his neck he would say, 'I want you to come to church with me. I want you to be a Christian. I want you to go to heaven with me. I want you to begin to love Jesus right off.' And so when the father entered his own door he would be sure to meet Willie pressing him to come to Jesus and to come to church. At first the father made every effort to divert the mind of the boy and turn the subject. But it was of no use. The boy was continually preaching and persuading.

"At last the father said one evening, 'Wife, I think we had better go to church, if for nothing else to satisfy Willie. I can not stand his importunity any longer.' So that night they both went with their little son to the prayer-meeting. Strange was the sight to see those two in the prayer-meeting! Never had they been so seen before. The meeting had only well begun when the father, on his own notion, went forward to the altar, and when he had reached it he turned around and addressed his friends and neighbors, saying: 'Friends, if you think Jesus can have mercy on such a sinner as I am, I want you to pray for me.' His face betrayed deep distress. Instantly the little boy was on his feet and running around through the crowd looking for his mother; and when he had found her he took her by the hand and begged her to come and kneel beside his father. With some reluctance she went and knelt, and the son knelt between his parents. The minister within the altar called on some one to pray. He attempted it and broke down. Then the minister tried, and he failed. Then the whole congregation were melted into tears before the Lord. The result was that in a short time the father, and soon afterwards the mother, were converted. The father said he had heard some of the best preachers of New-York, but he had never heard any preaching so touching and powerful as the preaching of his little Willie—'Come to Jesus, father! come to Jesus!'"

#### Precious Diamonds.

AMONG the most costly and admired of earth's jewels are diamonds of the purest water. These are sought after with intense de-

sire by the rich and the great in all lands. They attract the eye of every beholder. They never tarnish or decay. Diamonds are little sparkling gems found in the dry beds of streams in South America, and perhaps in other places. They are wrought with immense labor and carefulness by skillful artists, and then sold to deck the crowns of kings, etc., often for thousands of dollars.

In the world of mankind we find that which is analogous to this, though far more interesting and valuable. A human being is a precious diamond. Its sparkling eyes tell of a precious soul back somewhere. It is worth more than the whole world. But it must be wrought by moral artists with much care, and withal by the aid of Christ himself. And finally, it will deck his royal diadem in the day when he makes up his jewels.

Christian reader, you may find these diamonds all around you. Will you help work them so that they may sparkle in the crown of Christ? And ye impenitent, will you consent to be moulded and curiously wrought to become Christ's precious jewels?

#### Glad Tidings.

A RICH Hindoo asked his priest what he must do to find rest and peace of mind. "You must wash yourself," said the priest, "in the sacred river" (Ganges.) He did so, but without relief; the curse of sin weighed his soul to the very ground. A pilgrimage was then imposed upon him to an idol temple. He went a hundred and fifty hours through burning sands, but felt as much oppressed by the curse as before. He once more sought counsel of his priest. He said: "You shall be helped." The Hin-

doo promised every thing. He was then charged to drive sharp nails through the soles of his shoes, to take a heavy block on his shoulder, and in this manner to walk for fifty hours. He undertakes the severe penance. Already he has gone twenty hours amid the most dreadful pains; when he reaches a village where he observes a large congregation listening to a foreigner preach. He was a missionary, who was saying to his heathen brethren, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!" and declaring to them that the Savior would give peace to all who believed in him. The burdened man drank in the message as if it had been honey. He cast the block from his shoulders, drew his thorny soles from his feet, and called out in the midst of all the people: "He is the one that can help me! He it is that I am seeking. In him I will believe, and him will I follow."

#### Time's Soliloquy.

OLD! call you me? Ah! when the Almighty spoke creation into birth I was there. Then was I born. 'Mid the bloom and verdure of paradise I gazed upon the young world radiant with celestial smiles. I rose upon the pinions of the first morn, and caught the sweet dew drops as they fell and sparkled on the boughs of the garden. Ere the foot of man was heard sounding in this wilderness I gazed out on its thousand rivers, flashing in light, and reflecting the broad sun, like a thousand jewels upon their bosoms. The cataracts sent up their anthems in these solitudes, and none was here to listen to the new-born melody but I! The fawns bounded over the hills, and drank at the limpid streams ages

before an arm was raised to injure or make them afraid. For thousands of years the morning star rose in beauty upon these unpeopled shores, and its twin-sister of the eve flamed in the forehead of the sky, with no eye to admire their rays but mine. Ah! call me old! Babylon and Assyria, Palmyra and Thebes rose, flourished, and fell, and I beheld them in their glory and their decline. Scarce a melancholy ruin marks the place of their existence; but when their first stones were laid in the earth I was there! 'Mid all their splendor, glory, and wickedness I was in their busy streets, and crumbling their magnificent palaces to the earth. My books will show a long and fearful account against them. I control the fate of empires; I give them their period of glory and splendor; but at their birth I conceal in them the seeds of death and decay. They must go down and be humbled in the dust—their heads bowed down before the rising glories of young nations, to whose prosperity there will also come a date and a day of decline. I poise my wings over the earth, and I watch the course and doings of its inhabitants. I call up the violets upon the hill, and crumble the gray ruins to the ground. I am the agent of a Higher Power, to give life and take it away. I spread silken tresses upon the brow of the young, and plant gray hairs on the head of the aged man. Dimples and smiles, at my bidding, lurk around the lips of the innocent child, and I furrow the brow of the aged with wrinkles. Old! call you me! ay, but when will my days be numbered? When will time end and eternity begin? When will the earth and its waters—and the universe be rolled, and a new world commence its revolutions? Not

till He who first bid me begin my flight so orders it. When his purposes, who called me into being are accomplished, then, and not till then—and no one can proclaim the hour—I too shall go to the place of all living.

### The Years.

THE years roll on, the years roll on;  
The shadows now stretch o'er the lawn  
Whereon the sunlight fell at morn—

The morn of mortal life;  
And dusky hours to me have come,  
Life's landscape now looks drear and dumb,

And quenched the light, and ceased the hum,

With which my way was rife.

I now look backward on the path  
Whereon I've walked 'mid wrong and wrath;

I look and see how much it hath  
Of bitterness to tell;  
But life's hard lesson must be learned;  
By goading care is wisdom earned—  
Then upward let the eye be turned,  
And all life's scenes are well!

On roll the years, the swift, still years;  
And as they pass, how feeling sears—  
How drieth up the fount of tears—

Emotion's fires grow dim;  
This pulse of life not long can last,  
And as the years go hurrying past,  
The blooms of life are earthward cast,  
And withered heart and limb.

The years, the years sublimely roll,  
Unfurling like a lettered scroll!

Look on, and garner in thy soul

The treasures of their lore;

It is God's writing there we see!

Oh! read with deep intensity!

Its truth shall with thy spirit be

When years shall roll no more.

### The Child and the Queen.

How strikingly true it is from the following incident that out of the mouth of babes is ordained praise:

*Befurchte* (gardener to Elizabeth, consort of Frederick II.) had one little daughter, with whose re-

ligious instruction he had taken great pains. When this child was five years of age, the Queen saw her one day while visiting the Royal gardens at Shonhausen, and was so much pleased with her that, a week afterward, she expressed a wish to see the little girl again. The father accordingly brought his artless child to the palace, and a page conducted her into the Royal presence. She approached the Queen with untaught courtesy, kissed her robe, and modestly took the seat which had been placed for her by the Queen's order, near her own person. From this position she could overlook the table at which the Queen was dining with the ladies of her Court, and they watched with interest to see the effect of so much splendor on the simple child. She looked carelessly on the costly dresses of the guests, the gold and porcelain on the table, and the pomp with which all was conducted; and then folding her hands, she sung with a clear, childish voice, these words:

"Jesus! thy blood and righteousness.  
Are all my ornament and dress;  
Fearless, with these pure garments on,  
I'll view the splendors of thy throne!"

All the assembly were struck with surprise, at seeing so much feeling, penetration, and piety in one so young. Tears filled the eyes of the ladies, and the Queen exclaimed, "Ah, happy child! how far are we below you!"

THE CHURCH ADVANCING.—A ship, in order to reach its destined port, may be under the necessity of crossing a wide and rapid ocean-current, by which it shall be carried backward many leagues. But when it has crossed this current, though farther from its port than when it entered, it is still nearer

to it in a most important sense. It has overcome an obstacle that must needs have been surmounted. It has not been, upon the whole, going backward, but advancing, and its prospects for the future are now brighter than ever before.

So the Church of God, in her progress toward universal extension, has been swept back by many counter-currents, and has at times seemed to be further from her haven than at the beginning. But God has ever stood at her helm, and has steered her in the best way toward the fulfillment of the glorious promises which he has given her. She has not been, in the great scale of success, going backward, but always forward.

#### Rules for Home Education:

1. FROM your children's earliest infancy, inculcate the necessity of instant obedience.

2. Unite firmness with gentleness. Let your children always understand that you *mean* exactly what you *say*.

3. Never promise them any thing unless you are quite sure you can give them what you promise.

4. If you tell a little child to do something, show him how to do it, and see that it is done.

5. Always punish your children for willfully disobeying you, but never punish them in anger.

6. Never let them perceive that they can vex you or make you lose your self-command.

7. If they give way to petulance and temper, wait till they are calm, and then gently reason with them on the impropriety of their conduct.

8. Remember that a little *present* punishment, when the occasion arises, is much more effectual than

the threatening of a greater punishment, should the fault be renewed.

9. Never give your children any thing because they cry for it.

10. On no account allow them to do at one time what you have forbidden, under the like circumstances, at another.

11. Teach them that the only sure and easy way to *appear* good is to *be* good.

12. Accustom them to make their little recitals with perfect truth.

13. Never allow of tale-bearing.

#### The Little Inquiring Girl.

It must be a pleasing sight to angels as well as to men to see little girls coming to give their young hearts to Jesus, the Savior of their souls. The minds of children, though naturally prone to sin, are still tender, and like the wax, ready to receive the stamp of heaven on their hearts when impressed by the Holy Spirit. We can not doubt that many serious impressions on the minds of children are lost, which with proper care on the part of parents and teachers might result in their conversion to God. The following may serve as an encouragement:

"In time of a revival, when the Holy Spirit descended with uncommon power, a little girl, at the close of the service, pressing through the anxious multitude, and coming to the place where the minister stood, said, with a look and tone of voice bespeaking the deep anxiety of her heart, 'I have been seeking religion for some days, but can not find it. Will you tell me what I must do to be saved?' He was struck with her solemn address and apparent sincerity, and directed her to cast her burdened, guilty soul into the arms of her gracious



Savior, and choose God as her Father, and with a broken heart love and obey him without delay. She retired, and shortly after, as she hoped, gave up her heart joyfully to God, and chose him as her unfailing portion. She held on her way, and united with the visible Church. Some months after she was seized with a rapid consumption and died; but her end was peace. Her great work was done; a sweet serenity sat upon her countenance. Death had lost its sting and the grave its dreariness. Leaning upon the arm of her beloved, with the rod and staff to comfort her, she fell asleep in Jesus, and ascended, as we trust, to her rest and home in the skies. Now had that child refused that favored moment to make God her refuge she might have gone down to the grave unpardoned, and sunk to a world of endless sorrow."

#### What have we Done?

AN important question: What have we done? We have breathed, moved, and lived on the fruits of the earth. Have we made others better or happier? have we accomplished any good for mankind? have we been the instruments of suppressing vice and immorality, and promoting virtue and industry? If not, it is high time for us to inquire, What have we done? Certain it is, if we live on in the same dull round no one will ever point to us as the instruments of good, and we shall pass off the stage of life, leaving the world in a worse condition than we found it. If there is a life that we look upon with a kind of horror it is such as those characters lead who never cast a thought to the future, nor care what is the influence they exert, provided they enjoy the present

moment and pass away quickly the time that would otherwise hang heavily upon their hands. A laudable ambition we are bound to encourage—an ambition that will prompt to holy deeds and generous impulses—that will lead the possessor, step by step, in the path of usefulness. Let all our young men be thus ambitious, and whenever they shall feel like asking themselves, "What have I done?" they could point to much that would give them pleasant reflections and make them at last resigned whenever the summons came for them to prepare for the grave.

#### A Few Pointed Questions.

Do you remember daily that you, and all in your hands and under your charge, belong to God?

Do you remember that there is given unto you these talents to be used for their owner, who will require interest?

Have you not been laying up the Lord's money and substance for your children and heirs, and saying you could not afford to help the Lord's cause when it has been even in great straits?

Where does the Lord say lay up treasures on earth, or make secure your money, and houses, and stocks, and merchandise here? The stock of all earthly banks and all securities will be of little value to you when you come to die?

What will you say of all these when He calls upon you to give an account of your stewardship?

Will it not be a dreadful matter for you to die with the Lord's money and substance, which he trusted with you to do his will, secured carefully, and kept in your own hands, for your own use, and kept by you from him?

Man, thou art born for immor-

talily. Thy soul is to live when this world is burned up. The day when thy body shall die is at hand. What art thou doing for that day and for the eternal being of thy soul? Every day sends its solemn call into thy ears, and every dying man from his grave lifts up the solemn warning. And a voice within thee cries, What art thou doing?

Lost souls, now in hell, would give riches and honors with every thing the world affords, for but an opportunity to escape from the damnation of hell. But you, alas! with eternity upon you, with a soul unconverted, unsanctified, without any hope of heaven, are letting those precious moments pass in which you might secure eternal life, and by your neglect are running the fearful risk of being lost forever.

A man seeking riches, and neglecting his soul's salvation, is like a man in the dark on the brink of an awful precipice, endeavoring to catch a fire-fly, who, on securing it, falls headlong, and is dashed to pieces.

#### Quench not the Spirit.

QUENCH not the Spirit! Beware, lest, grieving the Spirit, he cease to move upon your heart, and you become hardened. And oh! think what it is to be hardened! It is to have all the moral and religious sensibilities of the soul deadened. It is to become reckless and unconcerned. It is to be habitually in such a frame of mind that there are no compunctions for the past—no apprehensions for the future; deaf to all the calls of mercy, stupid under all the means of grace. It is to be habitually in such a frame of mind, that all promises and threatenings are alike disregarded, and all motives and appeals equally unavailing. As the

dead man feels not the burning of the coal lodged in his bosom, nor the flinty rock the softening influences of the showers of heaven, even so it is with him whose heart is hardened. He may be in the sanctuary, but the most pungent discourses make no impression. He may witness sacramental scenes, but they inspire no solemnity—even funeral rites and the burial of the dead affect him not. Spread before him the glories of heaven, and he is not allured; point him to the torments of the damned, and he is not alarmed. Lead him to Calvary, and talk to him about the love of Jesus and his dying agonies, and he is as insensible as steel. Friends may entreat, but he heeds not; ministers may warn, but he repents not. Others may feel, but he feels not; others may weep, but he weeps not. He is hard as rock; or say,

“—Some alarming shock of fate  
Strikes through his wounded heart,  
The sudden dread! another moment, and  
alas!

—where past the shaft no trace is  
found,

As from the wing no scar the sky retains,  
The parted wave, no furrow from the keel.”

The rock may be rived, but it is rock still. It may be broken into a thousand fragments, but there is no softening yet; and so it is with the sinner, when the drawings of heaven resisted, and the Spirit quenched, the sinner is left to himself and becomes incorrigible and hardened—past feeling and past hope! Let me be poor, let me be a bondman, let me be a beggar, but let me not, given up of the Spirit, be a hardened sinner! O my God, cast me not away from thy presence, neither take thine holy Spirit from me. Fellow-sinners, take care what you do just now. You are in solemn circum-

stances, and great interests are at stake! Many of you are under the influence of divine drawings now, and some, perhaps, who are not fully aware of it. Oh! remember

"God's Spirit will not always strive  
With hardened, self destroying men;  
You who persist his love to grieve  
May never hear his voice again."

For the Prayer-Meeting.

#### The Sailor Boy's Prayer.

THE Cordelia was a good ship; but at one time we feared she was on her last voyage. We were but a few days out from the harbor, when a severe storm of five days' continuance overtook us. I must tell you of an act performed by a sailor boy at the height of the storm. He was literally a boy, and far better fitted for thumbing a spelling-book than furling a sail in a storm. The ship was rolling fearfully, some of the rigging got entangled at the mainmast head, and it was necessary that some one should go up and put it right. It was a perilous job. I was standing near the mate, and heard him order that boy to do it; he lifted his cap, and glanced at the swimming mast, the boiling sea, at the steady, determined countenance of the mate. He hesitated in silence a moment; then rushing across the deck, he pitched down into the fore-castle; perhaps he was gone two minutes, when he returned, laid his hands upon the ratlines, and went up with a will.

My eyes followed him till my head was dizzy, when I returned and remonstrated with the mate for sending the boy aloft. "He will not come down alive, and why did you send him?" "I did it," replied the mate, "to save life; we've sometimes lost men overboard, but never a boy; see how he holds like a squirrel; he is more

careful; he'll come down safe, I hope." Again I looked till tears dimmed my eyes, and I was compelled to turn away, expecting every moment to catch a glimpse of his last fall.

In about fifteen or twenty minutes he came down and walked aft with a smile on his countenance.

In the course of the day I took occasion to speak to him, and asked him why he hesitated when ordered aloft? "I went, Sir," said the boy, "to pray." "Do you pray?" "Yes Sir; I thought that I might not come down alive, and I went to commit my soul to God." "Where did you learn to pray?" "At home; my mother wanted me to go to the Sunday-school, and my teacher urged me to pray to God to keep me, and so I do." "What was that you had in your pocket?" "My Testament, which my teacher gave me; I thought if I did perish, I would have the Word of God close to my heart."

#### A Citizen of Heaven.

A CHRISTIAN does not turn his back upon the fine things of this world, because he has no natural capacity to enjoy them, no taste for them; but because the Holy Spirit has shown him greater and better things. He wants flowers that will never fade; he wants something that a man can take with him to another world. He is like a man who has had notice to quit his house, and having secured a new one, he is no more anxious to repair, much less to embellish and beautify the old one; his thoughts are upon the removal. If you hear him converse, it is upon the house to which he is going. Thither he sends his goods; and thus he declares plainly what he is seeking.

**"Is that Mother?"**

Among the many brave, uncomplaining fellows who were brought up from the battle of Fredericksburg, was a bright-eyed, intelligent young man, or boy, rather, of sixteen years, who belonged to a Northern regiment. He appeared more affectionate and tender than his comrades, and attracted a good deal of attention from the attendants and visitors. Manifestly the pet of some household, he longed for nothing so much as the arrival of his mother, who was expected, for she knew he was mortally wounded and failing fast. Ere she arrived, however, he died. But he thought she had come, for while a kind lady visitor was wiping the death sweat from his brow, as his sight was failing, he rallied a little, like an expiring taper in its socket, looked up longingly and joyfully, and in the tenderest pathos whispered, quite audibly, "Is that mother?" in tones that drew tears from every eye. Then, drawing her towards him with all his feeble power, he nestled his head in her arms like a sleeping infant, and thus died, with the sweet word "mother" on his quivering lips.

**God Revealed in Redemption.**

SUPPOSE you are standing over against some palace, and it is near midnight, and the gates are opened. Forth from that palace gates there comes a procession. The Prince has come forth attended by many of his train. He has not gone far, however, before you hear that the Prince has dropped a beautiful gem. He is anxious about that gem not simply for its intrinsic value, but it was the gift of one he loved, and he calls for lights: You never saw the Prince in your life, and in that dim dark-

ness you have not been able to see much except a very imperfect outline of him; but now a lamp has come, and the Prince in his anxiety to find his gem takes the lamp in his own hand, and there he is looking for the lost gem. Now, the light which falls on the road where that gem is lying goes up also into the face of the Prince, and while he finds his gem you see him as you never would have seen him but for that loss. Now, it is like that with the revelation of God. I tell you that when the great God came forth from the retirement of eternity—when he came forth from the shrouding darkness that had been about him in his own eternity, to the salvation of men, there was light which, while it was thrown on the poor, lost sinner that he might be found, was thrown upon the face of God, who came to seek him and to save him.

You know creation is not a manifestation of the personalities so much as a manifestation of the nature of God. It shows forth not the personalities as distinguished from each other, but it shows his eternal power and Godhead; but when you get the plan of salvation the personal distinctions come out. You see the Father loving, pitying, giving his Son; you see the Son coming to redeem; you find the Spirit applying; and thus you get a revelation of that wonderful deep of God's inner life—the personal distinctions of the Holy Trinity; and perhaps if it had not been for this plan of salvation these things might not have been known to any of his creatures; and thus the redemption of man is a lesson with regard to the nature of God, and the very angels themselves were taught by what was witnessed here.—*Rev. S. Cole.*